



M Grace Messenger

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH

122 Walnut Street
Madison, AL 35758
256-837-8821

GBC HOMEPAGES

<http://www.gbcmadison-al.com>
<http://sermonaudio.com/gbcmadisonal>
<https://www.facebook.com/GraceBaptistMadisonAL>

"Preaching the free grace of God which brings a change of lifestyles, masters and destinies."

DEAN OLIVE, Pastor

— August 2015 Issue —

*"A disciple is not above his teacher,
nor a servant above his master."*

Matthew 10:24

NURSERY SCHEDULE

August

02 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
09 Troy and Jessica Moseley
16 Melanie Myatt and Lori Hewlett
23 Vicki Johnson and Nellie McFadden
30 Amber Solan and Wilma Pinch

September

06 Linda Olive and Andrea Page
13 Jenny and Peter Lovassy
20 Troy and Jessica Moseley
27 Melanie Myatt and Lori Hewlett

CHURCH CLEANING

August - Amber and Vicki
September - Moseleys
October - Parkers

LAWN CARE

August - Various servants
September - Jon Amis

FINANCIAL SUMMARY AS OF AUGUST 1, 2015

Budgeted expenditures (ytd)	\$ 87,914.87
Actual on-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 88,486.56
Actual off-budget expenditures (ytd)	\$ 3,731.24
General Fund offerings (ytd)	\$ 96,319.17
Designated Missions (ytd)	\$ 4,346.24
Love offerings (ytd)	\$ 3,880.00
Benevolence (ytd)	\$ 0.00
Total offerings (ytd)	\$104,545.41
July Love offerings	\$ 0.00
July General Fund offerings	\$ 14,545.20
July Designated Missions	\$ 316.24
Building Fund balance	\$156,089.17
Missions Fund balance	\$ 3,077.53
General Fund balance	\$ 52,149.99

O Father, You Are Sovereign

Margaret Clarkson

O FATHER, You are sovereign
in all the worlds You made;
Your mighty Word was spoken
and light and life obeyed.
Your voice commands the seasons
and bounds the ocean shore,
sets stars within their courses
and stills the tempest's roar.

O Father, You are sovereign
in all affairs of man;
no powers of death or darkness
can thwart Your perfect plan.
All chance and change transcending,
supreme in time and space,
You hold Your trusting children
secure in Your embrace.

O Father, You are sovereign,
the Lord of human pain,
transmuting earthly sorrows
to gold of heavenly gain.
All evil overruling,
as none but Conqueror could,
Your love pursues its purpose —
our soul's eternal good.

O Father, You are sovereign!
We see You dimly now,
but soon before Your triumph
earth's every knee shall bow.
With this glad hope before us
our faith springs up anew:
our sovereign Lord and Savior,
we trust and worship You!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

NORMAL SUNDAY SERVICES

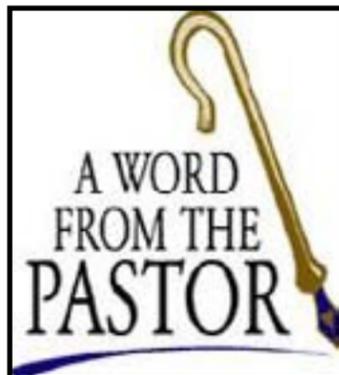
Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Bible Study and Prayer Meeting
7:00 PM

FIRST SUNDAY SERVICES

Morning Worship 9:30 AM
Sunday School 11:00 AM
Dinner at the Church 12:00 Noon
Afternoon Service 1:30 PM
(No Evening Service)



Depth of Mercy

Depth of mercy, can there be/Mercy still reserved for me?/Can my God his wrath forbear?/Me, the chief of sinners, spare?

One of the most well-known stories in the Gospels is that of the man called Legion, who

met Jesus on the shore of the country of the Gerasenes (Mark 5:1-20). When Jesus stepped out of the boat in which he was a passenger, this demon-possessed man met him.

What did Jesus do? He cast the demons out of this deranged man. Jesus sent the demons into a herd of pigs who ran over the cliff into the sea and were drowned. The man, whose right mind returned, clothed himself and sought to go with Jesus and his disciples.

But Jesus refused his request. Instead, Jesus directed him to return to his home and tell all his friends what the Lord had done for him. And then Jesus instructed him to tell his friends that it was mercy that was the cause of his liberty.

Jesus told him to tell his friends how the Lord “has had mercy on you” (19). That is the key statement in this entire 20 verse section! What Jesus did was to cast the demons out of him but his act was rooted in mercy.

Some translations have the word compassion rather than mercy, but that is incorrect. Compassion is an element of mercy but the two are distinct. The word compassion literally means, “to be moved in the inward parts.” We can show compassion to baby birds whose mother has died. The element of sin isn’t necessarily present when showing compassion. But mercy is always revealed in a context of sin.

Mercy entails a compassionate disposition but it is directed toward someone who has sinned and who is in need. Mercy comes alongside to forgive and relieve. Mercy sees us in a state caused by sin and brings relief. Mercy always presupposes a problem related to sin and acts out of that need.

Any act of goodness towards sinners is rooted in mercy. Jesus wanted the formerly possessed man to tell his friends that he had mercy on him. Jesus brought relief to him. Jesus could have brought down justice on him but he showed mercy instead.

And that is true for all of us. Justice is what we deserve. We have sinned against God. We have defied his holy will. We have mocked him and promoted ourselves. We deserve all the misery that comes from sin. We deserve the flames of hell BUT God is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4)! We have received mercy instead of justice. *Great is the*

gospel of our glorious God/Where mercy met the anger of God’s rod!

Just because we need mercy doesn’t mean a magic wand is waved and mercy springs up. God displays mercy by upholding his justice. Jesus died in our place on the cross to satisfy justice and at the same time display mercy!

We must tell our friends exactly what this man went and told his friends. Jesus has shown us mercy. We deserved hell but he had mercy. We merit punishment but had mercy. We ought to be cast into eternal misery but he had mercy. *Tis mercy all, immense and free/For, O my God, it found out me!*

There is a wonderful expression in Micah 6:8 about mercy. Micah says, “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, **to love mercy**, and to walk humbly with your God?” (NKJV).

The Hebrew word for mercy is *chesed*, one of the most important words in the OT. It speaks of God’s covenant love, or as the ESV usually renders it, steadfast love. That word embraces the ideas of grace, kindness, love and mercy. There really isn’t a good one word translation for it. But in the Greek translation of the OT (LXX) the word that is most often used to translate it is *eleeo*, the word that translates mercy in the NT.

We are instructed to love mercy! We ought to demonstrate mercy, and those who have received it will, but God wants us to love mercy! We need to be enraptured by the beauty of mercy! We like to talk about the things we love. Men who love their wives and women who love their husbands talk well of them. We talk well of hobbies that we love or food that we love or movies that we love.

If we cherish mercy we will talk about it. We will always be telling people how undeserving we were and are and how merciful God is. If we ever lose sight of the depths of sin from which we have been rescued, we will cease talking about mercy. So we need to remember from whence we have come and magnify the mercy of God in Christ!

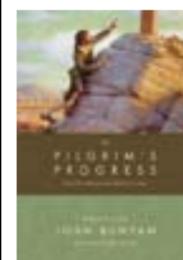
Mercy is a jaw-dropping truth! Amidst the reality of sin in our lives we have experienced mercy. We cried out, “*God, be merciful to me a sinner*” (Luke 18:13), and God showed us mercy. We didn’t deserve it but we have graciously received it.

Let’s meditate on mercy. Let’s love mercy. Let’s show mercy. Let’s talk about mercy. May God help us to do as the demoniac did. He went and told his friends how much the Lord had done for him and how he had mercy on him. *A debtor to mercy alone* will tell others about that mercy and how they can find it too!

BOOK REVIEW



The Pilgrim’s Progress: From This World to That Which Is to Come, by John Bunyan (Author), C. J. Lovik (Editor), Mike Wimmer (Illustrator), Crossway.



There is little argument that no book, outside of the Bible, has had more impact on Christians throughout the last 400 hundred years than Bunyan’s classic, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. It is a clear and instructive narrative of being drawn to Christ, preserved by grace, and delivered into his presence. The book is a literary and spiritual jewel.

But there has often been a problem for me in personally getting all that I can get out of it and sharing it with my family. I have often felt like I had to do a lot of extra reading (commentaries) and personal paraphrasing in order to explain the details to my kids (ranging from 4 months to 14 years).

Thankfully the good folks at Crossway publishing have given folks like me a hand. They have published this deluxe hardback edition filled with many helps to make things easier for us. There are Scripture references at the bottom of each page to indicate the passages that correlate the narrative. There is a comprehensive commentary in the back of the book to further explain various passages. And most importantly, C.J. Lovik has done a fantastic job updating the language for modern readers without compromising the literary beauty of the book.

This is a great tool to escort the younger generations into the world of Bunyan’s allegorical masterpiece.

Erik Raymond



AUGUST 20 – The Sovereign Grace Pastor’s Conference will be hosted by Providence Baptist Church, Pulaski, TN. Services begin at 10 AM. All are invited to attend. Lunch is provided by the church. Preachers are Chad Beck, James Bell, and Johnny Truelove.

AUGUST 30 – John Divito, currently administrator of Covenant Baptist Theological Seminary, but who is going to Africa to take charge of the administrative responsibilities

for the African Pastor’s Conferences, will be preaching in the morning service and telling us about his recent visit to Africa and the work he will soon take up in the SS hour.

SEPTEMBER 2 – Men’s Reading Group resumes at 6 AM. We will be reading the edition of *The Pilgrim’s Progress* edited by C. J. Lovik (see book review). The meeting finishes promptly at 7.

SEPTEMBER 14-15 – The Southeast regional FIRE conference will be held at Grace Baptist Church, Hartsville, TN. The theme of the conference is, *Loving Your Neighbor: Local Evangelism and Outreach*. Preachers are Gary Hendrix, Eddie Expositio, and David Selvey.

Spurgeon’s Catechism with Scripture Proofs



Question 14: What is Sin?

Answer: Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.

Scriptural Proof: 1 John 3:4 [Genesis 3:16-17; Romans 5:13; 1 Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48; 1 Corinthians 10:31]

Commentary: We do not have to search very long in the Bible to find the answer to the question, What is Sin. The answer is given in Genesis 2 and 3, in the account of the first sin. What was the first sin? The answer is perfectly clear – it was disobedience to a command of God. God said, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree” (Gen. 2:17). Man ate of the fruit of the tree, and that was sin.

But sin has two distinguishable elements. “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God.” That is, sin is not doing what God tells us to do and/or doing what God tells us not to do. “Sin is any attitude or desire or action that explicitly breaks a commandment of Scripture, or comes from a heart of unbelief or is not done for the glory of God” (Desiring God).

The most elementary thing, however, about sin is that it is contrary to God’s law. “You cannot believe in the existence of sin unless you believe in the existence of the law of God. The idea of sin and the idea of law go together” (Machen).

God said to Adam, “You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree.” That was God’s law. It was a definite command. Man disobeyed that command. Man did what God told him not to do, and that was sin. God later gave 10 Commandments. This law teaches man to know what is right and good and holy. God’s law is holy, even as God himself is holy.

It is an awful thing to sin against God, to transgress his law. But there is mercy for lawbreakers. That mercy comes to us from One who kept the law and suffered it’s penalty in the place of the guilty. The consciousness of sin leads us to the Lamb of God who takes away sin, to Jesus Christ the righteous. In him we find forgiveness for sin.



Richard Sibbes Puritan Quotes A FEW SPARKS

“In the small seeds of plants lie hidden both bulk and branches, bud and fruit. In a few principles lie hidden all comfortable conclusions of holy truth. All these glorious fireworks of zeal and holiness in the saints had their beginning from a few sparks.”

A Touch of the Grace of Humility

John J. Murray

Although the tendency to self-congratulation is no new phenomenon, the outlets for it have increased enormously... In an age when there is a low state of godliness it is not surprising that self-esteem and self-publicity should be prevalent. A. B. Bruce said: 'The whole aim of Satanic policy is to get self-interest recognized as the chief end of man.'

Self-exaltation was the aim of Satan himself: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty" (Ezek. 28:17). He looked upon his own beauty and wisdom. He wanted to glorify himself rather than God. He did not want to serve but to be served. He is cast down to the earth: "For thou hast said in thine heart I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God" (Isa. 14:14)

Satan tempted our first parents after the same manner. He said "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). They wanted to exalt themselves and to rob God of his glory. As a result all mankind fell into sin. Man could only be saved in a way that would restore all the glory to God. Christ, the last Adam, was able to say: "I restored that which I took not away" (Psa. 69:4). As the new Representative Man he restored the glory to God in his obedient life and atoning death. "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). It is all in Christ.

A. A. Hodge declared: "All self-consciousness is of the very essence and nature of sin." The aim of the gospel is to turn us from self-consciousness to Christ-consciousness. Sin is self-love. There is no humility or meekness

before there is sin-consciousness. Humility is the logical corollary of sin-consciousness. It is the man who is poor in spirit and mourns for his sin who is humble. A man can never be meek unless he sees himself as a vile sinner. The meek man is not proud of himself, he does not in any sense glory in himself. God is glorified in man's dependence...

Where will this humility reveal itself? It will be seen in true piety. "What is piety?", asks Professor John Murray, and he answers, "It is godliness. Godliness is God-consciousness, an all pervasive sense of God's presence, of his judgment, of our relation to him and his relation to us, of our responsibility to him and dependence upon him."

Paul was determined not to know anything save Jesus Christ and him crucified. God ordained this so that "no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. 1:29). Dr J. I. Packer said, "The experimental piety of the Puritans was natural and unselfconscious because it was utterly God-centered; our own (such as it is) is too often artificial and boastful, because it is so largely concerned with ourselves. Our interest focuses on religious experience as such and on man's quest for God, whereas the Puritans were concerned with the God of whom men have experience, and in his manner of dealings with those who he draws to himself."

If the modern "gospel" gives man a part to play in his salvation then he has somewhat to glory in himself. A.A. Hodge says: "If there is any evidence of pride in connection with his claim it is a most deadly mark – it is the plague-spot that marks death and corruption." The convicted sinner knows that it is only in union with Christ, the Representative Man, in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension that he can be saved. He

will not rest in any scheme that does not give all the glory to God. It is all in Christ. 'I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish' (John 10:28).

Dr D. M. Lloyd-Jones, in his magisterial work on the Sermon on the Mount says, "Meekness is essentially a true view of oneself... The man who is truly meek is the one who is truly amazed that that God and man can think of him as well as they do, and treat him as well as they do."

What a gulf there is between that attitude and the idea so prevalent in the in recent decades, epitomized in Robert Schuller's *Self-Esteem: the New Reformation* (1982). We all have to watch against pride. "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6). As John Bunyan reminds us, "He that is down need fear no fall." Some counsel from Jonathan Edwards is worth reflecting on:

"Humility tends to prevent an ostentatious behavior. If the truly humble man has any advantage or benefit of any kind, either temporal or spiritual, above his neighbors he will not affect to make a show of it. If he has greater natural abilities than others, he will not be forward to parade and display them, or be careful that others shall know his superiority in this respect. If he has a remarkable spiritual experience, he will not be solicitous that men should know it for the sake of the honor he may obtain by it; nor does he affect to be esteemed of men as an eminent saint and a faithful servant of heaven; for it is a small thing with him what men think of him."